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REMARKS

The present application includes claims 1-12 and 14-27. Claims 1-19 and 21-27 have been rejected by the Examiner. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 8, 15, 21, and 23 have been amended. By this Amendment, claims 13 and 20 have been cancelled.

The Applicant first notes that, as indicated by the Examiner in the Office Action, claim 13 was not present in the application as filed. The Examiner has treated claim 13 as a cancelled claim number and the Applicant agrees and has included claim 13 in the listing of claims above as a cancelled claim.

Claim 20 was subject to a restriction requirement.

Claims 3 and 23 were objected to because of informalities.

Claims 1-3, 8, 9, 15, 16, and 21-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Shiraogawa et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,343,305 ("Shiraogawa").

Claims 4-7, 10-12, 14, 17-19, and 24-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiraogawa in view of Shi et al., U.S. Pat. No. 6,411,689 ("Shi").

The Applicant now turns to the restriction requirement made by the Examiner. The Examiner has identified the following two groups of claims and requires that the examination in the present case be restricted to only one of the groups of claims.

Group I: Claims 1-12, 14-19, and 21-27, drawn to a satellite-based facsimile distribution system, classified in class 358, subclass 1.15.

Group II: Claim 20, drawn to an Ethernet Digital Storage Card, classified in class 711, subclass 115.

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As indicated by the Examiner in the Office Action, during a telephone conversation, an election was made to prosecute the claims of Group I, that is, claims 1-12, 14-19, and 21-27.

The Applicant hereby affirms the earlier telephonic election. Consequently, the claim of Group II, that is, claim 20, has been canceled.

The Applicant now turns to the objection to claims 3 and 23. Claims 3 and 23 were objected to due to informality. Specifically, the Examiner noted in the Office Action that in both claims the recitation of "said recipient information" lacks antecedent basis. The Applicant has amended claims 3 and 23 to depend from claims 2 and 22, respectively which recite "recipient information." The Applicant respectfully submits that the elements recited in claims 3 and 23 as amended now have proper antecedent basis and that the Examiner's objection has been overcome.

The Applicant now turns to the rejection of claims 1-3, 8, 9, 15, 16, and 21-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Shiraogawa. Shiraogawa generally relates to a multiple addressing facsimile system. More specifically, as discussed beginning at col. 3, line 28 and as illustrated in Fig. 4, Shiraogawa discloses a facsimile signal received at a satellite communications receiver and sent to a switching control device. The switching control device sends the facsimile signal to a single facsimile device. The single facsimile device receives the signal and, if the signal is meant for the facsimile device, the image receiving operation for the facsimile begins. That is, as explained at col. 6, lines 55-64, the switching control device includes a relay to select an input when a facsimile signal is received. Then, as described at col. 6, line 65 to col. 7, line 7, the single facsimile device determines whether the received facsimile

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signal is intended for the facsimile device and, if so, performs the image receiving operation. Thus, a facsimile signal is received over a satellite circuit and sent to a single facsimile device to determine if the signal was intended for that device and should thus be received.

However, Shiraogawa does not teach an affiliate faxing a document to more than one recipient. Rather, as discussed above, Shiraogawa merely discloses receiving a facsimile signal and then performing the image receiving operation at a single facsimile device if the facsimile signal was intended for that facsimile device. Thus, Shiraogawa does not teach faxing a document to more than one recipient.

Independent claims 1, 8, 15, and 21 have been amended to recite an affiliate faxing a document to a plurality of recipients. As discussed above, Shiraogawa does not teach an affiliate faxing a document to more than one recipient. Consequently, the Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent claims 1, 8, 15, and 21, and corresponding dependent claims 2-3, 9, 16, and 22-23, are in condition for allowance.

The Applicant now turns to the rejection of claims 4-7, 10-12, 14, 17-19, and 24-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiraogawa in view of Shi. Shi generally relates to facsimile call success rates in long delay environments. More specifically, as discussed beginning at col. 3, line 9 and as illustrated in Fig. 2, Shi discloses a facsimile transmission relay apparatus having an interface connected to a first network for receiving a facsimile signal from a transmitting facsimile device. The relay buffers the signal and retransmits the signal to a receiving facsimile device over a second interface connected to a second network. The relay monitors messages from the receiving facsimile device and generates messages to the receiving facsimile device in order to maintain communication with the transmitting facsimile device.

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That is, as described at col. 2, lines 46-47, Shi teaches a technique that permits reliable facsimile transmission between a single transmitting facsimile device and a single receiving facsimile device in the presence of long delays.

However, Shi does not teach or suggest an affiliate faxing a document to more than one recipient. Rather, as discussed above, Shi merely discloses a relay for facilitating communication between a single transmitting facsimile device and a single receiving facsimile device in long delay environments.

As discussed above, Shiraogawa does not teach at least the limitation of amended independent claims 1, 8, 15, and 21 of an affiliate faxing a document to a plurality of recipients. Additionally, as discussed above, Shi does not teach or suggest this limitation. Thus, neither Shiraogawa nor Shi, alone or in combination, teach or suggest elements of independent claims 1, 8, 15, and 21, from which claims 4-7, 10-12, 14, 17-19, and 24-27 depend. Consequently, the Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claims 4-7, 10-12, 14, 17-19, and 24-27 are in condition for allowance.

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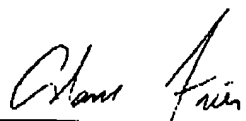
CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and a Notice of Allowability is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions or the Applicant can be of any assistance, the Examiner is invited and encouraged to contact the Applicant at the number below.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any necessary fees or credit any overpayment to the Deposit Account of McAndrews, Held & Malloy, Account No. 13-0017.

Respectfully submitted,

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